

REMARKS

The above amendment and these remarks are responsive to the Office Action of Examiner James A. Kramer, dated 28 July 2004.

Claims 1-7 and 9-17 are in the case, none as yet allowed.

35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, and 17 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) over Maners.

Applicants have previously amended all claims to clarify that it is the individual that originally submitted a requisition, or created the original order, that must approve the resulting invoice, and by this amendment

END920000175US1

14

S/N 09/815,313

clarifies that that individual is the end-user (as distinguished from purchasing or accounting personnel).

Applicants invention relates to a method and system for invoice authorization by the original requester (that is, individual employee) with invoices presented to the requester in a particularly useful and user friendly manner whether such invoices are received hard copy or by EDI. These concepts are explained in applicants' specification, for example, at page 16, line 20 to page 19, line 10.

Maners U.S. Patent 6,507,826 B1 relates to EDI processing, which is automation between computer systems and refers to interactions between a vendor and an invoice processing system. This allows the vendor to enter the invoice, and have it processed by the system. Maners describes an "agent" that authorizes payment of invoices, but nowhere teaches how to manage images, nor that the "agent" must be the individual employee submitting the original requisition for goods and services to be consumed or use (end-use) by that individual employee. Maners does not teach enabling users (in a corporation) to review those invoices. Applicants invention relates to the process of enabling individuals who ordered the original goods a

END920000175US1

15

S/N 09/815,313

corporation for their own use to ensure that payment is made, or not made, based on their being able to view the original invoice images, and supports both EDI and manual processing.

Applicants have amended these claims to clarify that their system and method provides for having the individual who created the original order make the determination that the resulting invoice from the vendor should be paid (or not). In applicants' invention, unlike Maners "agent", there is no centralization of payment authorization.

Applicants urge that claims 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, and 17 be allowed.

35 U.S.C. 103

Claim 3 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Maners in view of Admitted Prior Art.

Claim 3 depends from claim 1, which has been amended to clarify distinctions with respect to Maners, distinctions

BND920000175US1

16

S/N 09/815,313

which are not taught by the APA asserted by the Examiner.

Claims 2, 8, 9, 12, and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Maners in view of Cukor et al. (hereinafter Cukor).

Applicants have canceled claim 8 without prejudice.

With respect to claims 2, 9, 12, and 13, Cukor describes the management and processing of shipping transactions via image processing. Cukor relates to capturing images rather than dealing with the hard-copy paper associated with shipping. Applicants' claims, on the other hand, do not relate to shipping. They have been further amended to focus on enabling the end user who ordered goods for his own consumption to ensure that proper payment is processed for those goods by viewing invoices electronically.

The workflow of Cukor does not address any associated business workflow, such as payment or reconciliation of goods received. It does offer a detailed breakdown of how imaging systems can reduce the large amount of paper (and error) usually associated with such processing. However, it

END920000175US1

17

S/N 09/815,313

like Maners, does not describe any end-user decision points for paying for goods received, particularly on the claimed point that such decision is made by the original end-user individual employee requester in accordance with the process now more clearly set forth in the amended claims.

Applicants request that claims 2-3, 8-9, and 12-13 be allowed.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicants urge that the above amendments be entered and the case passed to issue with claims 1-7, and 9-17.

The Application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action by the Examiner is urged. Should differences remain, however, which do not place one/more of the remaining claims in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to phone the undersigned at the number provided below for the purpose of providing constructive assistance and suggestions in accordance with M.P.E.P. Sections 707.02(j) and 707.03 in order that allowable claims

END920000175US1

18


S/N 09/815,313

can be presented, thereby placing the Application in condition for allowance without further proceedings being necessary.

Sincerely,

T. A. Aber, et al.

By


Shelley M Beckstrand
Reg. No. 24,886

Date: Monday, 14 Mar 2005

Shelley M Beckstrand, P.C.
Attorney at Law
61 Glenmont Road
Woodlawn, VA 24381

Phone: (276) 238-1972

END920000175US1

19

S/N 09/815,313